

## A photographic record of Hume's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus humei* from Wayanad District, Kerala

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**H**ume's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus humei* is a scarce but widespread winter visitor to peninsular India. However, the bird has not been recorded so far within the political limits of Kerala, though it has been regularly observed from areas very close to the Kerala border in the eastern slopes like Bodi Ghat and the access road to Parambikulam Tiger Reserve (Sashikumar *et al.* 2011). I observed and photographed one individual from Tranquil resorts (11°38'45.91"N, 76°13'2.36"E) near Sultan Batheri, Wayanad district on March 2010 – it showed an all dark beak, darkish legs,



greyish cast upper parts, greenish cast to primaries and secondaries, long white supercilium, dark-grey eye-stripe, two whitish wing-bars with dark borders, second wing-bar small and faint, broad white edges to tertial feathers and a short tail (Fig. 1). The image has been contributed to Oriental Bird Images ([www.orientalbirdimages.org](http://www.orientalbirdimages.org)). This appears to be the first photographic record from Kerala.

### Reference

Sashikumar, C., Praveen, J., Palot, M.J. and Nameer, P.O. (2011) *Birds of Kerala: Status and Distribution*. DC Books, Kottayam. Pp: 724

## Birds – predator and prey

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### 1. Rufous Treepie *Dendrocitta vagabunda* preying up on a rat

On 5 February 2012 at Punnassery, Kozhikode district, Kerala, I saw a Rufous Treepie *Dendrocitta vagabunda* hunting a rat on top of a coconut tree. I could witness the final act of killing, after which, with a triumphant elegance the bird made the typical 'tu tui' call many times. It then took the kill to another tree and started eating. With a powerful sideways jerk of the head, the skin of the prey was torn open and in the same way, chunks of meat were swallowed and the prey was finished off within half an hour. The rat was black in colour and was of medium size; probably a House Rat.

### 2. Ruby-throated Bulbul *Pycnonotus malanictus gularis* in the diet of False Vampire Bat *Megaderma* sp.

I had noticed that the two rooms of the soil testing laboratory building, Karimbam, Thaliparamba, Kannur, where I work, in the night were frequented by False Vampire bats *Megaderma* sp. On many a days, when the rooms were opened in the morning, we saw evidence of the visit of the bats: scattered over the floor usually were the large leaf like wings and hook-like limb parts of grasshoppers, obviously the leftovers of their night's meal. The main hall and the research room had no other entrance except for some small ventilators close to the roof and no other predator can enter the rooms once the doors are closed. On 4 April 2012, I saw scattered feathers, which could be identified as those of Ruby-throated Bulbul *Pycnonotus malanictus gularis*, inside the research room and identifiable remains of an immature bird of the same species in the main hall. These two rooms were separated with doors which are safely closed in night. In all probability, it appeared that the bats had consumed two Ruby-throated Bulbuls in the previous night.